

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 1

Introduced by Assembly Members Bermudez and Tran
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Chan, DeVore, Evans, Huff, Klehs, Liu, Matthews, Mullin, Nakanishi, Negrete McLeod, Torrico, Umberg, and Yee Yee, Aghazarian, Arambula, Baca, Berg, Blakeslee, Bogh, Calderon, Canciamilla, Chavez, Chu, Cogdill, Cohn, Daucher, De La Torre, Dymally, Emmerson, Frommer, Garcia, Goldberg, Hancock, Harman, Jerome Horton, Shirley Horton, Houston, Jones, Karnette, Keene, Koretz, Laird, Leno, Leslie, Levine, Lieber, Maze, McCarthy, Nava, Niello, Nunez, Parra, Plescia, Richman, Ridley-Thomas, Sharon Runner, Ruskin, Saldana, Salinas, Spitzer, Strickland, Vargas, Villines, Wolk, and Wyland)

(Coauthor: Senator Cox)

December 6, 2004

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 1—Relative to Dr. Dalip S. Saund.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 1, as amended, Bermudez. Dr. Dalip S. Saund.

This measure would memorialize the President and Congress of the United States to urge the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee and the United States Postal Service to issue a commemorative stamp to honor Dr. Dalip S. Saund, and would urge all Californians to celebrate his birthday each year in recognition of Mr. Saund's outstanding achievements.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Dr. Dalip S. Saund immigrated to the United
2 States from India at a time when Indian nationals were denied
3 eligibility for American citizenship; and

4 WHEREAS, Thanks to his initiative and the help of Indians in
5 California and New York, Congresswoman Clare Booth Luce
6 and Congressman Emanuel Celler were convinced to jointly
7 introduce a bill in the United States Congress to allow Indian
8 nationals to become American citizens, and after a long and hard
9 struggle the bill was signed by President Truman on July 3, 1946;
10 and

11 WHEREAS, Though Dr. Saund had started as a farmhand, he
12 obtained a Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley,
13 and as a naturalized citizen started taking an active role in the
14 political process of his adopted homeland; and

15 WHEREAS, In June 1950, he won his first political battle
16 when he ran for and won a seat on the Imperial County
17 Democratic Central Committee; and

18 WHEREAS, In November 1950, he was elected as a judge in
19 Westmorland due to his exemplary grassroots campaign, but
20 because he had not been a citizen for one full year the judgeship
21 was denied him; and

22 WHEREAS, In 1952, he ran again for the judgeship against
23 the incumbent and won, serving as judge in Westmorland for
24 four years; and

25 WHEREAS, In October 1955, Dr. Saund became a candidate
26 for Congress from the 29th Congressional District, facing a
27 highly celebrated opponent who had rich supporters and who was
28 a personal friend of the then President of the United States; and

29 WHEREAS, With the help of dedicated volunteers, Dr. Saund
30 carried out an intensive campaign of voter registration, passed
31 out thousands of “Saund circulars,” visited thousands of homes,
32 and thus made a definite impact on voters, resulting in the
33 election of the “first native of Asia” to the United States
34 Congress on November 6, 1956; and

35 WHEREAS, Today, the population of Asian Americans in the
36 United States is in excess of 10 million, and Asian Americans,
37 and particularly Indian Americans, seeking political office
38 invoke Dr. Saund’s name, much the same way as Dr. Saund
39 himself invoked President Lincoln’s name, as a source of
40 inspiration and a worthy role model; and

1 WHEREAS, November 6, 2006, marks the 50th anniversary of
2 the historic election of Dr. Saund to the United States Congress:
3 now, therefore, be it

4 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*
5 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature of the State of California
6 respectfully memorializes the President and Congress of the
7 United States to urge the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
8 and the United States Postal Service to issue a commemorative
9 stamp to honor the first Asian member of Congress, Dr. Dalip S.
10 Saund; and be it further

11 *Resolved,* That the Legislature urges all Californians to
12 celebrate September 20 of each year, Dalip S. Saund's birthday,
13 in recognition of his outstanding achievement as the first native
14 of Asia to be elected to Congress; and be it further

15 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit
16 copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of
17 the United States, to the Speaker of the House of
18 Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to
19 each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress
20 of the United States, to the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee,
21 and to the United States Postal Service.